

# WHY A NEW CANAL?

Here's a Scheme to Use the Old and Save Millions.

ELECTRIC TOWING DOES IT.

Better Results Than a Barge Canal—Cost One-fifteenth.

Plan Laid Before Committee of the State Commission—It Has William Barclay Parsons' Indorsement and Is Backed Up by Figures of Other Eminent Engineers—Not Too Late for the State to Recede From the \$101,000,000 Mistake—Assemblyman Palmer, Who Sees the Point, Says the Motor People Are Tempting the Taxpayers to Save \$94,000,000—Their Canal Could Be Equipped in Two Years for More Than the Capacity of a Barge Canal, Which Won't Be Done for a Dozen Years—Would Do Away With Canal Taxes.

It was made plain by the statements of eminent engineers, backed up by figures and the record of practical demonstration, at a hearing given in this city yesterday that the building of the large canal would mean the burning up of at least \$100,000,000. It was shown that New York State, instead of spending \$101,000,000, perhaps twice that, on a work which would take, at the most favorable calculation, a dozen years to complete, can install within two years, at an expense of \$7,000,000, a towing system which would provide for the present Erie Canal more carrying capacity than is claimed for the 1900 ton barge canal. This was brought out at a meeting of the sub-committee of the commission appointed by act of the Legislature to investigate systems of electrical towing for the canal. The full commission met in New York last month and delegated the work of hearing inventors to a sub-committee consisting of E. L. Cortell (chairman), and William A. Brackenridge of the Advisory Board, appointed by the Governor, State Engineer Henry A. Van Alstyne and Assemblyman George M. Palmer and Edwin A. Merritt.

If the committee reports to the full commission the remarkable possibilities of electrical towing, as laid before them yesterday, and the commission lays the facts before the Legislature, it seems almost impossible that the Legislature should not take steps to avoid the waste of millions and give the people of the State an opportunity to check the wholesale, needless expenditure of their money by repealing the referendum of 1903.

It is true that the commission's sub-committee on plan and scope took upon itself last month to investigate "was intended to apply solely to towing on the new barge canal of the State," but the Legislature is likely to back back to its own resolution, impossible of such construction, which says plainly that the commission was appointed "for the purpose of investigating, and with power to investigate and report on, electrical towing systems applicable to the canal of the State of New York."

The facts and figures are before the sub-committee now, and it has to report them to the full commission, which, in turn, is responsible to the Legislature.

Perhaps the situation was best summed up by George M. Palmer, the minority leader in the Assembly, who said, when he had heard the plans and the absolute figures of cost:

"You are tempting the taxpayers to take for about \$7,000,000 for which they are expecting to pay \$101,000,000."

That was the proposition exactly and every man in the room knew that the taxpayers would like to be tempted—tempted to back out of the sorriest bargain the people of a State ever entered into—and that they would yield in a minute if they were not.

A hearing was held in Parlor H of the Murray Hill Hotel, beginning at 1 P. M. Besides the sub-committee, there were present Percy Thompson, president of the International Towing and Power Company, of 10 Wall street; the company's attorney, ex-Congressman John Murray Mitchell; one of its engineers, St. John Clarke, formerly of the Rapid Transit Commission, and Richard Lamb and Adam E. Schatt, owners of electrical towing devices.

THE SYSTEM TESTED SUCCESSFULLY.

Mr. Mitchell placed before the committee the plans of the device owned by the International Towing and Power Company. It is the invention of Stephen W. Wood, inventor of the tapering carriage of national reputation. The international company took up Mr. Wood's idea in 1902 and patented it. It is what is popularly known as the "electric mule," a traction engine running on an elevated rail along the bank of the canal, upper and lower wheels gripping the rail and the canal bottom, the traction friction necessary for towing.

Inventor Wood's plans were submitted to F. O. Blackwell, chief engineer of the mining and power department of the General Electric Company, who took charge of the designing and construction of electric locomotives for the system. C. W. Larson, the company's designing engineer, and St. John Clarke were associated with him.

It was impossible to make the merits of the invention known to the officials of the State before the time came to vote on the barge canal proposition, for the international company was unwilling to make any claims until the mule should have a practical demonstration. In 1903 it built a traction way 2,700 feet long on the outer edge of the towpath at Schenectady, with two electric mules to operate thereon. This place was chosen because of its curve and difficulties.

On Oct. 28, 1903, only a few days before the election at which the canal proposition was to be voted on, a public test was given with loaded boats. Supt. Boyd of the Department of Public Works said after the test:

"I believe that the equipment of the canal with the new electrical system will increase its carrying capacity to 10,000 tons a year, the estimated tonnage of a barge canal. I was at first sceptical about the system, but all my doubts were set at rest by the demonstration at Schenectady. The motor hauled four boats at an average

speed of four and a half miles an hour with apparent ease."

Gov. Odell and other State officials saw the test.

W. B. PARSONS INDORSES IT.

After Mr. Mitchell had presented the company's plans and drawings to the commission, then the following letter from William Barclay Parsons, consulting engineer of the Rapid Transit Commission:

320 Broadway, New York, 29th December, 1904. P. Thompson, Esq., President International Towing and Power Company:

My Dear Sir: At your request I have examined your plan and the accompanying papers and estimates for the use of electricity as a motive power for towing boats on the New York State canal.

From the plans and papers as presented it appears that you propose to use the present canal as much tannage as is likely to offer for an enlarged canal, but without the large expense incident to the latter. Such being the case, it would seem to be well worthy of careful consideration and examination by the State authorities. Very truly yours, WILLIAM BARCLAY PARSONS.

PROTECTING THE BUNCO.

That was a body blow for the \$101,000,000 thing, and Chairman Cortell happened got nervous lest it should be hammered too much. He said:

"This committee can consider only plans which relate to the new barge canal. It has been decided upon by the full commission. We cannot consider plans for the present Erie Canal."

"I did not understand that as the sense of the resolution," said Mr. Mitchell.

"This present sub-committee is acting under instructions," said the chairman.

"The committee ought to hear what the plan is and then decide what is germane to the purposes of the commission."

The Chairman—Would you undertake to apply your system to other parts of the barge canal?

Mr. Thompson—Our system would not apply to canalized rivers or lakes.

State Engineer Van Alstyne presented a map showing the route of the four miles, saying that, roughly, about one-third of the present canal would be along the course of canalized rivers and lakes.

WHAT THE MULE WOULD DO.

Mr. Thompson was allowed to present the figures prepared by Engineers Blackwell and Clarke, showing speed and cost under the Wood system on the present Erie Canal.

Mr. Blackwell was to have presented them, but the storm kept him up State.

It was shown that the electric mule would haul a flotilla of four boats of a total cargo of 1,000 tons at the rate of four miles an hour, including locking, or eighty-eight hours for the trip. Mules make less than one and a half miles an hour.

At a yearly output of 2,000,000 tons, the cost of hauling per ton mile (that is the way canal transportation is figured) would be practically one mill, the cost decreasing as the tonnage increased. On a 10,000,000 ton basis it would be only two-fifths of a mill per ton mile. This would include the cost of the mules, interest on equipment and depreciation.

The earnings to the State, if it should adopt the electric mule, giving a percentage to the owners, would be \$1,300,000 gross and \$948,140 net with 2,000,000 tons; or \$5,500,000 gross and \$3,220,700 net with 10,000,000 tons. This calculated on the assumption that the mule would charge 50 cents a ton from Buffalo to Troy, or Troy to Buffalo, a distance of 322 miles.

ASTONISHING CONTRASTS.

Now here's the thing that the people of this State will be interested in—the figures of the engineers comparing the cost of the barge canal proposition, with a capacity of 10,000,000 tons a year, and the cost of the present canal, which is a barge canal, with a capacity made possible on account of rapid transit—of \$7,000,000 tons a year.

At the cost of building the barge canal at the estimated figure of \$101,000,000, although every one knows it will run far in excess of that amount. Add \$54,540,000 interest on the cost of building the barge canal, and the total cost would be \$155,540,000. It will cost \$1,000,000 a year to maintain the canal this bringing in no revenue to the State.

What the present canal electrically equipped the net earnings on the light tonnage it now carries would be \$48,140 a year, or \$5,168,520 in eighteen years, if the tonnage did not increase a pound in that time.

If the tonnage increased to 10,000,000 annually, as the advocates of the barge canal claim, the electric mule would net \$5,220,000 a year for the State, or \$57,479,000 in eighteen years. That's more than enough to deepen the canal to nine feet, maintain it, pay the \$9,000,000 debt and abolish all taxes for canal purposes.

Electrically equipped, the present canal, according to the figures of the experts, Blackwell and Clarke, could carry 10,000,000 tons a year with 553 flotillas of four boats each. Each flotilla could carry 1,000 tons east on a trip and 240 tons returning, the westbound canal traffic being comparatively light. Each flotilla would make twelve round trips between Buffalo and New York.

A flotilla of four boats, each of 250 tons capacity, costs \$14,000. Its operating cost for a season is figured at \$5,455.50, which includes 3 per cent. on the investment, a reserve fund to replace the boats in fifteen years, repairs, insurance, wharfage, towing, and the cost of fuel and oil and other items. All that, of course, is a matter which concerns the boat owners.

ANNUAL COST TO THE STATE.

What the electric mule would cost the State is set forth in figures gathered by the engineers from the past reliable sources. There would be the original investment previously referred to as \$7,000,000, but really half a million less in the Blackwell-Clarke statement. The annual expenditure would be \$6,021,421, including power, wages, oil and waste, a 3 per cent. depreciation on \$5,000,000 property, and a 10 per cent. depreciation on \$500,000 maintenance of way and general expense. This makes the cost per ton mile .0018, or easier, about 1-15 mills.

Mr. Thompson told the committee that only thirty-four electric mules would be needed for the entire canal. Brackenridge, who is an engineer, seemed greatly interested.

"Are these figures theoretical or the result of the experiments at Schenectady?" he asked.

"They are practical results," said Mr. Thompson.

Mr. Thompson filed figures showing the present cost of steam tows and the cost as it would be on a barge canal. Now, he declared, the cost per ton was 87 cents. It would be \$1.17 on the barge canal. The cost per ton mile is now 1.75 mills. On the barge canal it would be 2.37 mills.

man Palmer made sure of this a minute later.

A MUFFLED QUESTION.

"This question need not appear in the minutes," said he, "but I would like to ask whether your system can be applied to all parts of the canal?"

Chairman Cortell directed the stenographer to take a rest.

"Certainly it can," said St. John Clarke. "And I don't object to having that taken down by the stenographer. We tried to solve the problem of the canal as they may make the experiments with the understanding and the hope that our system might be considered, even if it were a little late. I hope we are not too late now. The mule has been on a trial run."

Messrs. Thompson and Clarke were subjected to minute questioning as to the ability of the motor to overcome grades, how the grip worked, etc.

"Have you tested it enough to know about its reliability?"

"Yes," said Mr. Clarke. "The device is new, but the principles are old."

"Have you taken into consideration unfavorable conditions and bad luck?" asked Assemblyman Merritt. Mr. Thompson laughed.

"It would be run in a business like way, as railroads are run," said he, "and not in the haphazard way that the canal is run now. These figures for the present canal are absolute."

"Then," said Assemblyman Palmer, "you are tempted to take a rest?"

Mr. Van Alstyne remarked that a State expert had calculated three or four miles an hour as the limit of economical speed on the canal.

"We ran as high as 9 miles an hour," said Mr. Thompson, "but I think that 4½ miles is the economical speed."

OTHER PLANS.

Mr. Lamb, whose device has been tried at Tonawanda, explained it. He said that a speed of more than three miles an hour in the present canal was impracticable, and the speed would be reduced accordingly toward the bottom. He is in favor of the barge canal, which he said would be of great benefit, because barges towed down the Great Lakes could come through to New York without breaking bulk.

"That is," he remarked to the committee, "if the Buffalo interests don't sit down too hard on you."

It will be remembered that some of the Grand Appropriators wanted a barge canal to feed down the Erie Canal, and they toward the bottom. He is in favor of the barge canal, which he said would be of great benefit, because barges towed down the Great Lakes could come through to New York without breaking bulk.

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SUPT. GEO. W. MORGAN'S REPORT

CAUSE OF THE REDUCED TOTAL VOTE IN THIS CITY.

He Says It Is Due to Decrease in Floating and Lodging House Vote—Complete Card Index of Voters in This City—Amendments to the Election Law.

ALBANY, Jan. 5.—Despite the fact that the population on Manhattan Island has been increasing yearly, George W. Morgan, Superintendent of Elections for the metropolitan district, in his report of the operations of his department during the last year, says that for some reason previous to last fall's election, the number of votes cast in Manhattan and Bronx boroughs was 35,000 less than might have been expected, as compared with the increased registration and vote in those boroughs during the two previous presidential elections.

This reduction, Mr. Morgan says, was brought about chiefly by large decreases in the registration of the downtown districts of Manhattan, which contain a large floating and lodging house population and of which most of the work of his office was concentrated on the days of registration and on election day.

The report devotes much space to naturalization frauds and declares that this State, by proper legislation, should aid in their prevention. It is pointed out that during the four months the investigation was in progress 4,500 holders of naturalization certificates were examined, special attention being paid to the Italian vote. The result of this investigation was 232 arrests and the cancellation of papers in 407 other cases. In all 639 certificates out of 4,500 were found to be fraudulent. During this year there were 362 indictments for crimes against the naturalization laws in the United States Circuit Court for the Southern District of New York. Of these 233 pleaded guilty and sentence was suspended on the surrender of their certificate, 81 were deported, 63 imprisoned, 71 are in custody and awaiting trial, seven were convicted and are awaiting sentence and six were acquitted.

Concerning Gov. Odell's efforts to get a complete card index of New York city, Mr. Morgan said: "The most valuable asset which this office has gained as the fruit of the work of the past year, is a complete card index of the city, which is maintained by assembly and election districts, of the 68,504 voters of the city of New York who registered for the general election of 1901. The preparation of this catalogue was begun on the night of the first day of registration. One card was devoted to each voter, and it was entered upon the appropriate card. When the registration books are opened next fall, therefore, the card index will be ready for use. Information regarding these hundreds of thousands of voters arranged in the most compact form for instant reference."

An amendment to the election law is suggested which will require a person who registers to state the year in which he last registered or voted. Mr. Morgan also suggested that the law be amended so as to permit ample time to scan the registry list and for subsequent court proceedings.

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CHATTANOOGA IS STANCH.

Cruiser Proved Her Seaworthiness in Tuesday's Gale—A Test.

NEWPORT, R. I., Jan. 5.—The cruiser Chattanooga, which left here on Tuesday afternoon on her endurance run to sea for twenty-four hours, returned to Newport this morning and left at noon for New York. She was at sea during the severe storm of Tuesday night and had a rough time of it.

After leaving Newport, the Chattanooga ran south until 5 P. M. when the sea and wind rose so that she headed for the lee of Long Island. She had been making fifteen knots in the high sea. About 11 P. M. she found Fire Island light ahead, the storm being at its height, with a blinding snow and seas breaking over her fore and aft. All the upper works of the vessel were coated with ice and she pitched and rolled so that it was dangerous to be on deck.

After being on the trial eight and a half hours, Capt. Dayton of the inspection board called the test off, and the speed of the vessel was reduced to eight and then to four knots. The gale continued until Wednesday, when it began to moderate. The vessel was headed for Black Island and then Narragansett Pier, off which place she anchored at 11 o'clock last night, coming here this morning.

The members of the board are satisfied that the vessel demonstrated her stanchness thoroughly, and she will be recommended by the board for acceptance by the Department.

NO NEW PRESENTMENT YET.

Bishop Tuttle Not Decided What to Do if More Action Comes in Talbot Case.

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 5.—Bishop Tuttle, President of the Episcopal Church, received a letter yesterday the contents of which he said caused him to conclude that Mr. Jenkins would not come to St. Louis with a new presentment against Bishop Talbot. The presentment might come, the Bishop admitted, by letter and not at the hands of a messenger, but his opinion seemed to be that any action within the next few days was unlikely.

"Perhaps there is a plan," he said, "to withdraw the present presentment and substitute another one under the new canon, but I cannot tell as yet whether such a plan would properly come before me or not. It seems as if I had discharged my whole duty in appointing the present board, and until the body and its action are entirely out of the way I do not see how I can act upon a new presentment. Of course, everything will depend upon the provisions of the new canon which since Jan. 1 has been in operation. I have not yet received a copy of the new canon, though I have sent for it."

DELAWARE DEADLOCK STANDS.

Addicks Faction Is Weakening, However—Treaty for the Present.

DOVER, Del., Jan. 5.—The Addicks Assemblymen were glad enough to join the Regular Republicans in an armistice this evening. They left the State Capitol for their homes, delegating five Assemblymen to remain here and keep both houses in continuous session balloting for presiding officers. Their forces were never so near wreck. They are divided into three camps, each hostile to the other. Addicks, Allee, Marshall and others of their leaders are conspicuously absent. None seem willing to come openly and assume the responsibility for the hold-up of the State's legislative machinery.

Balloting for United States Senator must begin on Tuesday, but cannot begin as required by Federal law, with neither house organized, and even the sober Senate unable to have a roll call. The Senate and House each took six ballots to-day without effecting an organization.

SLOCUM SURVIVORS BITTER.

Association Talks About Balance of Retired Fund in Pastor Haas's Hands.

A nineteenth regular meeting of the Slocum Survivors' Association, held in Schutzen Hall last night, much dissatisfaction was expressed by the members that the \$18,000 remaining from the relief fund had not been placed at their disposal by Pastor Haas of St. Mark's Lutheran Church. Several of the association members complained that when they had asked for relief they had been put off or refused.

President Charles Dersch advised the members to make application in every case where help was needed and to report to the executive committee all failures to extend aid.

"We do not wish to pound Pastor Haas," he said, "but we are in a position to see that justice is done, and we mean to do it."

It was suggested that on the coming Sunday all the members attend the First German Methodist Episcopal Church, where Pastor Henry Mueller is to christen a child of one of the members. Several of those present seemed to think that the christening was only a pretext and that the christening was the beginning of a break in the German Lutheran church of which Dr. Haas is pastor.

The president of the association reported that a bill was being pushed through Congress to bring the claims of the survivors of the great German famine before the Court of Claims. He said that Congressman Sulzer had assured him that the bill would pass, and he added that test cases would be tried at once.

Reports were also received on the fund with which it is proposed to erect a monument to the unknown dead in Lutheran Cemetery at Middle Village, L. I. It was reported that \$1,500 had been raised, and it is planned to expend at least \$30,000.

The incident which led to the meeting was the report that Walter Peters, whose death in the subway had been reported in the evening papers, was very much alive. Some of the Peterses in the audience were enthusiastic in their rejoicing.

A President Dersch was reelected.

SAVED 'EM.

Police Department to the Rescue of Maidens Afraid of the Dark.

"This is Nellie Martin," said a plaintive voice over the Police Headquarters' telephone about 8 o'clock last night. "I'm locked in Benziger's store at 36 Barclay street. Nellie Fitzpatrick and Emma Sonnenbiter are with me. The janitor went away and we didn't know it."

The sergeant called up the Church street station and to the Fulton street station, and to the Police Headquarters.

"Hello!" he yelled a few minutes later in front of the building, "where are you?" There was a loud tapping on a window pane on the second floor in reply and a minute later the window was pushed up. "Can't you come down to the ground floor?" said McGinnis.

"Yes, but how are you going to get in?" one of the girls replied. "The plate glass is broken."

"But why can't you open the storehouse door and come out?" inquired McGinnis, indicating a door to the right of the entrance.